

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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ICAE-00 INRE-00 SAA-01 SES-02 SSM-03 TRSE-00
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O R 151512Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3019
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
USINT BAGHDAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JIDDA 5959

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MARR, SY, SA, US
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH TURKI AL-FAISAL RE MIDEAST PEACE

1. SUMMARY: I MET WITH PRINCE TURKI AL-FAISAL FOR APPROXIMATELY AN HOUR 15 AUGUST. HE SUMMARIZED HIS JUST COMPLETED VISITS TO DAMASCUS, BAGHDAD AND AMMAN. THE SUADIS ARE URGING SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT CARTER AND HIS EFFORTS AT CAMP DAVID AND DEEMPHASIZING SADAT ROLE. TURKI THINKS HIS VISITS BORE FRUIT, ESPECIALLY IN SYRIA. END SUMMARY.

2. PRINCE TURKI AL-FAISAL RETURNED YESTERDAY FROM A VISIT TO ARAB CAPITALS, THE PRUPOSE OF WHICH WAS TO EXPLAON SAUDI SUPPORT FOR CAMP DAVID SUMMIT. I OPENED THE HOR'S MEETING BY TELLING HIM HOW MUCH WE APPRECIATED THE SUPPORT WHICH THE KINGDOM WAS GIVING FOR THE CAMP DAVID SUMMIT. I TOLD HIM THAT SAUDI PUBLIC CUPPORT FOR THE METTING DID MUCH TO DISPEL THE REPORTS THAT THE SAUDIS WERE NOT SUPPORTING THE PEACE EFFORTS AND THEWE REPORTS WERE
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DAMAGING USG-SAUDI RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY WITH CONGRESS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PUBLIC POSITION TAKEN I KNOW HAD NOT BEEN EASY, BUT WAS MOST MEANINGFUL TO U.S.

3. TURKI ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE MEETING WAS NOT EASY FOR THE SAUDIS AND HIS VISITS TO OTHER ARAB STATES WAS TO EXPLOAIN TIT. HW WAS UNUSUALLY FRANK

AND OUTSPOKEN. HE STARTED BY SAYING THAT THE SAUDI APPROACH WAS TO SECURE SUPPORT FOR PRESIDENT CARTER AND TO CONVINCE THE OTHER ARAB STATES THAT THE PRESIDENT'S INTERVENTION AS A "PARTNER" OR "PARTICIPANT" WAS AN IMPORTANT NEW ELEMENT WHICH SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED AND APPRECIATED.

4. TURKI'S OVERALL IMPRESSION WAS THAT THE ARABS FELT GENERALLY THAT LITTLE WOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED AT CAMP DAVID; THAT DESPITE A UNANIMOUSLY HIGH REGARD FOR THE PRESIDENT'S SINCERITY, THE FEELING EXISTED THAT THE US DID NOT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS HAVE THE WILL TO EXERT THE PRESSURE ON ISRAEL NECESSARY FOR THE TWO BASIC CONDITIONS FOR PEACE; I.E. WITHDRAWAL AND PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION.

5. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST WAS TURKI'S ACCOUNT OF HIS VISIT WITH ASSAD. HE SAID THAT ASSAD AGREED THAT HE SHOULD NOT SAY ANYTHING ELSE THAT WOULD UNDERMINE OR DETRACT FROM PRESIDENT CARTER'S EFFORTS AT CAMP DAVID. TURKI SAID HE POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT PRESIDENT CARTER'S POLICY IN THE MID-EAST HAD DEVELOPED STEADILY AND IN AN EVEN-HANDED WAY, MUCH TO THE AMAZEMENT OF MANY ARABS. HE SAID TO ASSAD THAT THE SAUDIS HAD SEEN THE PRESIDENT TESTED UNDER THE MOST SEVERE CIRCUMSTANCES DURING THE F-15 BATTLE AND COULD NOW ATTEST TO HIS COM-
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PLETE SINCERITY AND NON-SUSCEPTIBILITY TO ISRAELI PRESSURE.

6. TURKI POINTED OUT TO ASSAD IN A LESSON IN AMERICAN POLITICS THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD ALREADY ALIENATED THE ISRAELI LOBBY AND THE JEWISH VOTE IN THE US; THAT (ACCORDING TO TURKI) THE LOBBY HAD SABOTAGED OTHER PROGRAMS SUCH AS THE ENERGY BILL AND OPPOSED HIM ON THE TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO; THEREFORE THE PRESIDENT HAD NOTHING TO LOSE AND EVERYTHING TO GAIN BY MOVING AHEAD FOR MID-EAST PEACE ALONG THE LINES OF HIS PREVIOUS STATEMENTS.

7. IT WAS THEN THAT ASSAD AGREED TO AT LEAST A "WAIT AND SEE POLICY" ON CAMP DAVID. HE POINTED OUT TO TURKI TWO EXTREMELY DEEP IRRITANTS TO SYRIA.

8. THE FIRST OF THESE WAS THE PROPOSED CUTTING OFF OF AID TO SYRIA. ASSAD TOOK THIS AS BLATANT PRESSURE ATTEMPT WHICH HE SAID HE COULD NOT SUCCEED TO AND WHICH HE RESENTED HIGHLY.

9. THE SECOND POINT WAS SUSPICION OF USG ACTIVITIES IN

LEBANON. ASSAD SAID THAT HE FELT USG HAD FAR TOO MANY CONTACTS WITH PHALANGISTS AND OUR ATTITUDE AND ACTIVITIES THERE TOO SUPPORTIVE OF ISRAEL'S INTERESTS RATHER THAN THOSE OF LEBANON AND OR THE ARABS (SYRIANS).

10. TURKI SPECIFICALLY SUGGESTED THAT I RELAY THESE TWO POINTS TO USG, SAYING HE ASSUMED THAT ASSAD HAD ALREADY MADE THEM TO EMBASSY DAMASCUS, BUT HE (TURKI) WANTED TO EMPHASIZE THEIR IMPORTANCE AS WELL.
(COMMENT: I SUSPECTED THAT TURKI HAD BEEN REQUESTED BY ASSAD TO MAKE THIS POINT.)

11. TURKI ALSO REPORTED THAT YASSER ARAFAT WAS COMINGP TO SAUDI ARABIA THIS AFTERNOON OR TOMORROW TO REPORT ON A CONFIDENTIAL

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MEETING OF THE CONTROL COMMITTEE.

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12. TURKI SAID THAT THE SAUDIS HAD REQUESTED ARAFAT TO WITHOLD ANY NEGATIVE COMMENT OR CONDEMNATION OF CAMP DAVID SUMMIT FOR THE SAME REASONS AS ABOVE OUT-

LINED.

13. TURKI SAID ARAFAT HAD AGREED PERSONALLY TO REFRAIN FROM ANY FURTHER REMARKS, BUT HAD TO TAKE THE MATTER OF THE OFFICIAL POSITION OF THE PLO UP WITH THE CONTROL COMMITTEE, HENCE THE MEETING AND REPORT.

14. TURKI REVIEWED WITH ME THE HISTORY OF THE PLO'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE PEACE PROCESS. HE MENTIONED THE AGREEMENT WHICH THE SAUDIS FELT THAT THEY HAD WITH ARAFAT AT THE TIME OF THE VANCE VISIT IN 1977 TO TAIF; THEIR SUBSEQUENT DISAPPOINTMENT AT PLO RENEGING ON AGREEMENT.

15. HE THEN SAID THAT SOMETIME JUST AFTER THE JOINT U.S. - RUSSIAN STATEMENT, THE PLO THEN SAID THEY SHOULD CONFIDENTIAL

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ACCEPT THE VERBAGE AS ORIGINALLY AGREED UPON--BUT IT WAS THEN TOO LATE.

16. COMMENT: SAUDIS HAVE EVIDENTLY BEEN STUNG BY ACCUSATIONS THAT THEY ARE NOT SUPPORTIVE OF PEACE PROCESS AND ARE DETERMINED TO DISPROVE THE CHARGE. STATEMENTS ISSUED BY KING AND CROWN PRINCE AFTER AHERTON VISIT, TURKI'S EFFORTS AS SET FORTH, A LETTER FROM KING KHALID TO THE PRESIDENT (BEING SENT SEPT 1991) PLUS SAUDI COMMENTS IN SUBSEQUENT MEETING ALL REPRESENT EXTRAORDINARY SAUDI EFFORT TO SUPPORT U.S. EFFORTS. THE CATCH IS THAT IF CAMP DAVID FAILS, SAUDIS WANT SOMEONE OTHER THAN THEMSELVES TO HAVE TOTAL BLAME. WEST

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